

WORD OF THE LORD

Dr. Talmage Chooses a Unique Theme for His Discourse.

GLORY COMES HEREAFTER

A Year That Carries Consolation in the Weary and Heavy Loaden-The Goods and Trials of This World.

Rev. T. De Witt Talmage chose a unique theme as his subject for his Sunday-wk. "A House of Laug." The text selected being Proverbs 14:8. "Put thou my words into thy heart."

Hardly a mail has come to me for 20 years that has not contained letters saying that my sermons have comforted the writers of those letters. I have not this summer nor for 20 years spoken on the platform of any outdoor meeting but coming down I have been told by hundreds of people the same thing. So I think I will keep on trying to be a "son of consolation."

The prayer of my text was pressed out of David's soul by innumerable calamities, but it is just as appropriate for the distressed of all ages.

Within the past century travelers and antiquarians have explored the ruins of many of the ancient cities, and from the very heart of those buried splendors of other days have been brought up evidences of customs that long ago vanished from the world. From among tombs of these ages have been brought up lachrymatories, or lachrymaries, which are vials made of earthware. It was the custom for the ancients to catch the tears that they wept over their dead in a bottle, and to place that bottle in the graves of the departed; and we have many specimens of the ancient lachrymatories, or tear bottles, in our museums.

TEAR BOTTLES FROM CYPRUS.

When on the way from the Holy Land our ship touched at Cyprus, we went back into the hills of that island and bought tear bottles which the natives had dug out of the ruins of the old city. There is nothing more suggestive to me than the tear bottles which I brought home and put among my curiosities. That was the kind of bottle that my text alludes to when David cries, "Put thou my tears into thy bottle."

The text intimates that God has an intimate acquaintance and personal remembrance of all our griefs, and a vial, or lachrymatory, or bottle, in which he esteems and saves our tears, and I bring to you the condolence of this Christian sentiment. Why talk about grief? Alas, the world has its pangs, and now, while I speak, there are thick darknesses of soul that need to be lifted. There are many who are about to break under the assault of temptation, and perchance, if no words appropriate to their case be uttered, they perish. I come on no fool's errand. Put upon your wounds no salve compounded by human quackery; but, pressing straight to the mark, I hail you as a vessel indeed cries to a passing craft "Ship ahoy!" and invite you on board a vessel which has faith for a rudder, aid prayer for sails, and Christ for captain, and heaven for an eternal harbor.

Catherine Riesfeldt, a Prussian, keeps a boat with which she rescues the drowning. When a storm comes on the coast, and other people go to their kins to rest, she puts out in her boat for the relief of the distressed, and hundreds of the drowning has she brought safely to the beach. In this lifeboat of the gospel I put out today, hoping, by God's help, to bring ashore at least one soul that may now be sinking in the billows of temptation and trouble. The tears that were once caught in the lachrymatories brought up from Heracleum and Pompeii are all gone, and the bottle is asdry as the scoria of the volcano that submerged them, but not so with the bottle in which God gathers all our tears.

First, I remark that God keeps perpetually the tears of repentance. Many a man has awakened in the morning so writhed from a night's dole that he has sobbed and wept. Pain in the head, aching in the eyes, sick at heart and unable to step into the light. His grievances, not about his suffering, but only about its consequences. God makes no record of such weeping. Of all the million tears that have quivered as the result of such misery, not one ever got into God's bottle.

They dried on the several sheets or were dashed down by the blinding hand full into the red wine cup as fast as eyes could see the lips, foaming with still worse infatuation.

But when a man is sorry for his past and tries to do better—when he mourns his wasted advantages and bewails his repulsion of God's mercy and tries amid the lachrymatories of an ardent conscience, for help out of his terrible predicament, then God listens, then heaven bows down; then scatters of pardon are赦免ed from the throne; then his crying eases the heart of heavenly compassion until his hours are caught in God's bottle.

PAINFUL AND THE RUE.

You know the story of paradise and the perils. I think it might be put to higher adaptation. An angel starts from the throne of God to find what thing is on earth worthy of being carried back to heaven. It goes down through the gold and silver mines of earth, but finds nothing worthy of transportation to the celestial city. It goes down through the depths of the sea, where the pearls lie, and finds nothing worthy of taking back to heaven.

But coming to the foot of a mountain it sees a wanderer weeping over his ways. The tears of the prodigal start, but do not fall on the ground, for the angel's wing catches them, and with that treasure speeds back to heaven. "Behold the bright gem of earth, and the brightness jewel of heaven!"

"Well, you see, boy," said he earnestly, "I'll dash her way: A man draw up by his horse with a wagon load of ripe watermelons as far as he can get him while he goes to the blacksmith shop, an I done told him I would, but I hadn't got so strong to stand him, boy. Well I

can't fly the presence of such ill. You go to Switzerland to get clear of them, but, more sure footed than the mare that takes you up the Alps, your troubles climb to the top and sit shivering on the glaciers. You may cross the seas, but they can outlast the swiftest steamer. You may take caravan and pass east across the Arabian desert, but they follow you like a影子, armed with infestations. You plunge into the Amazon river, but you hang like skeletons from the root of the great cactus. They stand behind with sinewy fingers to pull you ashore. They stand before you to throw you back. They run upon you like reckless horses, their charge sweeping you with glistening

bodies. Not one out of ten! I do not exaggerate. The vast majority of the race are constant outposts of ailments. There is some one form of disease that you are particularly subject to. You have a weak side or back or are subject to headaches or faintness or lungs easily distressed. It would not take a very strong hand to shiver the golden bough of life or break the pitcher at the fountain. Many of you have kept on in life through sheer force of will. You think no one can understand your distress. Perhaps you look strong, and it is supposed that you are a hypochondriac. They say you are nervous—as if that were nothing! God have mercy upon any man or woman that is nervous!

You will wonder among the hills and say, "Up this hill last year, our boy climbed with great glee and waved his cap from the top," or "This is the place where our little girl put flowers in her hair and looked up in her mother's face," until every drop of blood in your heart tingled with gladness, and you thanked God with a thrill of rapture, and you look around as much as to say: "Who dashed out that light? Who filled this cup with gall?" What blast drove from these fountains of the heart?

Some of you have lost your parents within the last 12 months. Their prayers for you are ended. You take up their picture and try to call back the kindness that once looked out from those old, wrinkled faces and spoke in such a tremulous voice, and you say it is a good picture, but all the while you feel that, after all, it does not do justice, and you would give almost anything—you would cross the sea; you would walk the earth over—to hear just one word from those lips that a few months ago used to call you by your first name, though so long you yourself have been a parent!

Now, you have done your best to hide your grief. You smile when you do not feel like it. But though you may deceive the world, God knows. He looks down upon the empty cradle, upon the desolated nursery, upon the stricken home and upon the broken heart, and says: "This is the way I thrash the wheat; this is the way I scour my jewels! Cast thy burden on my arm, and I will sustain you. All those tears I have gathered into my bottle!"

But whether reported or uncomplaining, whether in seeming comfortable parlor, or in damp cellar, or in hot garret, God's angels of mercy are on the watch. This moment those griefs are being collected. Down on the back streets, in all the alleys, amid shanties and log cabins, the work goes on. Tears of woe—sweating in summer's heat or freezing in winter's cold—they fall not unheeded. They are jewels for heaven's casket. They are pledges of divine sympathy. They are tears for God's bottle.

Again, the Lord preserves the remembrance of all paternal anxieties. You see a man from the most infamous surroundings step out into the kingdom of God. He has heard no sermon. He has received no startling providential warning. What brought him to this new mind? This is the secret—God looked over the bottle in which he gathers the tears of his people, and he saw a parental tear in that bottle which has been for 40 years unanswered. He said, "Go to, now, and let me answer that tear!" and with the wanderer is brought home to God.

Oh, this work of training children for God! It is a tremendous work. Some people think it easy. They have never tried it. A child is placed in the arms of the young parent. It is a beautiful plaything. You look into the laughing eyes. You examine the dimples in the feet. You wonder at its exquisite organization. Beautiful plaything! But on some nightfall as you sit rocking that little one a voice seems to fall straight from the throne of God, saying: "That child is immortal! The star shall die, but that is an immortal! Suns shall grow old with age and perish, but that is an immortal!"

GOD UNDERSTANDS YOUR HEART.

Now, I know with many of you this is the chief anxiety. You earnestly wish your children to grow up rightly, but you find it hard work to make them do as you wish. You check their temper. You correct their waywardness; in the midnight your pillow is wet with weeping. You have wrestled with God in agony for the salvation of your children. You ask me if all that anxiety has been ineffectual. I answer, No. God understands how hard you have tried to make that daughter do right, though she is so very persistent and reckless, and what pains you have bestowed in teaching that son to walk in the path of uprightness. But on some nightfall as you sit rocking that little one a voice seems to fall straight from the throne of God, saying: "That child is immortal! The star shall die, but that is an immortal! Suns shall grow old with age and perish, but that is an immortal!"

Meanwhile let the empty lachrymatory of heaven stand for ever. Let no hand touch it. Let no wing strike it. Let no collision crack it. Purse that beryl or chrysoprase. Let it stand on the step of Jehovah's throne and under the arch of the unfading rainbow. Passing down the corridors of the palace, the redeemed of earth shall glance at it and think of all the earthly troubles from which they were delivered, and say, each to each: "That is what we heard of on earth." "That is what the psalmist spoke of." "There once were put our tears." "That is God's bottle." And while standing there inspecting this richest inland vase of heaven the towers of the palace dome strike up this silvery chime: "God hath wiped away all tears from all faces. Wherefore comfort one another with these transmuted tears of God's bottle."

I speak a cheering word. God heard every complaint you ever offered him. God has known all the sleepless nights you have passed. God has seen every sinking of your depressed spirit. God remembers your prayers. He keeps eternal record of your anxieties, and in his lachrymatory—not such as stood in ancient tomb, but in one that glows and glitters beside the throne of God—he holds all those exhausting tears.

The grass may be rank upon your graves and the letters upon your tombstones defaced with the elements before the divine response will come, but he who hath declared, "I will be a God to them and to thy seed after them," will not forget, and some day in heaven while you are ranging the fields of light the gates of pearl will swing back, and gaudied with glory that long wayward ones will rush into your outstretched arms of welcome and triumph. The hills may depart, and the earth may perish, but God will break his oath and triumph over his promises—never never!

Again, God keeps a perpetual remembrance of all bereavements. These are the trials that close the soul and throw the red hearts of men to be crushed in the divine response will come, but he who hath declared, "I will be a God to them and to thy seed after them," will not forget, and some day in heaven while you are ranging the fields of light the gates of pearl will swing back, and gaudied with glory that long wayward ones will rush into your outstretched arms of welcome and triumph. The hills may depart, and the earth may perish, but God will break his oath and triumph over his promises—never never!

"Yes sir."

"Well, go and watch him. I'll be there in 15 minutes, and I'll give you a quarter."

"Dad! I can't, boss," he insisted. "The god to go an go powerful quick."

"What's the matter?" he asked, considerably provoked.

"Well, you see, boss," said he earnestly, "I'll dash her way: A man draw up by his horse with a wagon load of ripe watermelons as far as he can get him while he goes to the blacksmith shop, an I done told him I would, but I hadn't got so strong to stand him, boy. Well I

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This summer many of you will especially feel your grief as you go to places where once you were accompanied by those who are gone now. Your troubles will follow you to the seashore and will keep up with the lightning flashes in which you speed away. Or, tarrying at home, they will sit beside you by day and whisper over your pillow night after night. I want to assure you that you are not half alone and that your weeping is heard in heaven.

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At this time comes consolation in the weary and heavy laden—the goods and trials of this world.

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